

REMARKS

In the Office Action, dated January 24, 2002, the Examiner states that Claims 11-20 are pending, Claim 11 is rejected, and Claims 12-20 are withdrawn from consideration. By the present Amendment, Applicant amends the claims.

In the Office Action, the Patent Office rejects Claim 11 under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Jahn (US 4,722,273) in view of EP 0,574,124. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the rejection.

According to the rejection, Jahn teaches a method of operating a printing unit in an offset machine having a convertible fluid applying unit 11. However, Applicant disagrees with the point of view that the fluid applying unit 11 should be comparable with the unit 28 of the present invention. The unit 11 disclosed in Jahn is described in column 3, lines 38-47. It is explained as a washing device 11 which is used together with a dampening unit 7 (explained in column 3, lines 31-32). The washing device 11 comprises a washing roller 12 which is in contact with a liquid in a collecting vessel 14. The washing roller 12 is in contact with a metering roller which is provided with a scraper or a doctor blade 15. When the device 11 is changed from washing to lacquering then it is necessary not only to disengage the inking unit 6, but also the dampening unit 7 is disengaged and moved away from the plate cylinder 5. Moreover, the plate cylinder 5 with the associated inking and dampening unit is decoupled from the machine drive, cf. column 3, lines 58-64. As such, Jahn differs from the present invention in that it is the dampening unit which is used for lacquering. The present invention only requires that an inking unit be disengaged from contact with the associated cylinder (the plate cylinder), then the dampening unit can be used for applying lacquer which is brought into contact with the cylinder (which would be the blanket cylinder which will then act as a plate cylinder as explained in the response filed December 5, 2000).

The use of open units to apply lacquer involves problems due to splash from the transfer roller. Such polluting splashing also occurs with a method according to Jahn when lacquer is provided in the vessel 24 and transferred by means of the roller 12 as explained by Jahn in column 4, lines 3-23. In this connection it should

also be noted that Jahn is aware of this problem and discloses that the rotary speed of the lacquer dipping roller 12 is a limiting factor, cf. column 4, lines 19-23.

Applicant has amended Claim 11 to positively recite the step of "providing a doctor blade chamber device". Since Jahn teaches the use of a dipping roller which involves the problems already explained, it is believed that Jahn teaches away from a method according to the present invention which claims a doctor blade chamber device is provided in the printing unit.

The Applicant respectfully disagrees with the obviousness rejection in view of amended Claim 11. EP 0,574,124 teaches liquid material circulated through the reservoir of the doctor blade unit by a suction flow to prevent the buildup of positive pressure within the doctor blade reservoir which makes it possible to operate the doctor chamber reservoir at or below atmospheric pressure. EP 0,574,124 does not give any disclosure that the teaching could or should be used with any benefit to instead use a transfer or dipping roller being in contact with a unit consisting of a metering roller and a scraper/doctor blade as taught by Jahn.

Furthermore, if one takes the starting point from Jahn then there would be no reason for a skilled person in the art of offset printing to replace the dipping and transfer roller system of Jahn with a doctor blade chamber device. The skilled person would already be able to effect a method in which it is possible to change the operation of the printing unit from an ordinary offset printing to a lacquer application. This argument is based on the fact that Jahn accepts that the lacquer application should be effected by the use of the open vessel 14 and the dipping roller 12 which is also used for water in the ordinary offset printing.

Therefore, the applicant believes that a person skilled in the art could not have readily combined Jahn with EP 0,574,124 to form the Applicant's claimed method.

The Office Action indicates that Claims 12-20 are withdrawn from consideration. Although the Applicant provisionally elected Claim 11 in response to the previous restriction requirement, the Applicant still asserts that Claims 12-20, which relate to the printing unit device itself, should be maintained and examined in the present application.

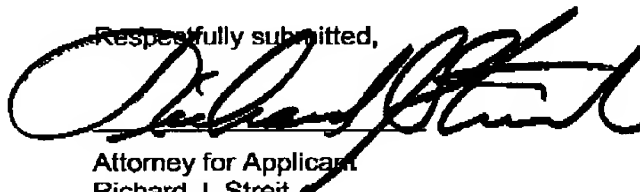
Under MPEP §803, in pertinent part, the Examiner must examine the entire application on the merits if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions. It is submitted that all claims 11-20 are sufficiently related that a complete search for the subject matter of any one group of claims would necessarily encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining claims. Indeed, it would appear that the subject matter of all the claims should be classified the same, and that all the claims should be examined in a single application. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider the restriction to Claims 12-20.

In light of the foregoing response, all the outstanding objections and rejections have been overcome. Applicant respectfully submits that this application should now be in better condition for allowance and respectfully request favorable consideration.

June 20, 2002

Date

Respectfully submitted,



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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANT: Henrik Leimand)
SERIAL NO: 09/446,991) Group Art Unit: 2854
FILED: December 30, 1999) Examiner: R.L Yan
TITLE: Method of Operation of a Printing Unit and Printing Unit for Offset
Machine

THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
Washington, D.C. 20231

MARKED VERSION OF CLAIM 11

11. A method of operating a printing unit in an offset machine[, the printing unit having a doctor blade chamber device, the method] comprising the steps of:

providing a doctor blade chamber device:

disengaging an inking unit from contact with a cylinder when the doctor blade chamber device of the printing unit is applying lacquer; and

engaging the inking unit to be in contact with the cylinder when the doctor blade chamber device of the printing unit is applying water.

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